

Momotaro: The Peach Boy

An English Version of Japan's Most Famous Folk Tale

Introduction

About Momotaro: Japan's Beloved Folk Tale

Momotaro, or "Peach Boy," is one of Japan's most famous folk tales. For centuries, parents have told this story to their children, and it remains a beloved part of Japanese culture today.

The story follows a miraculous boy born from a giant peach. He grows up to become a brave hero who, with three animal companions, defeats evil demons terrorizing innocent people. It is a tale of courage, friendship, and justice.

How to Use This Book

This book is written in clear English suitable for intermediate learners, roughly equivalent to TOEIC scores between 400 and 700. The grammar includes simple past, past progressive, present perfect, and other essential tenses.

Read the story naturally, paying attention to how English flows. You can use this book with audio learning tools to improve your pronunciation and comprehension.

Cultural Significance

Momotaro represents important values: courage, loyalty, teamwork, and fighting for what is right. The story teaches that even great challenges can be overcome when people work together and stay determined.

Now, let us begin the tale of the Peach Boy.

Chapter 1: A Mysterious Gift from the River

An elderly couple discovers a miraculous treasure that changes their lives forever.

Long ago in a small village, an elderly couple lived a simple life. They had no children, which made them sad, but they worked hard and were kind to everyone.

The old man gathered firewood in the mountains each day. The old woman took care of their home and helped their neighbors. Though poor, they were content and respected in the village.

One spring morning, the old woman went to the river to wash clothes. The weather was beautiful, with cherry blossoms blooming and birds singing. She found her usual spot on a flat rock by the water and began her work.

As she was washing, something unusual appeared upstream. A giant peach was floating down the river toward her. It was the largest, most beautiful peach she had ever seen—bigger than a watermelon, with perfect pink skin that seemed to glow in the sunlight.

"What a magnificent peach!" she exclaimed in wonder.

The peach floated directly to her as if guided by magic. She used a stick to pull it to shore, though it was very heavy. The sweet fragrance was amazing. She decided to take it home to share with her husband.

She rolled the huge peach along the ground until she reached their house. "Old man! Come and see what I found!" she called out.

The old man came outside and stared in amazement. "What is that extraordinary thing?"

"A peach! It floated down the river to me. Shall we eat it together?"

They brought the peach inside and the old man prepared to cut it with his sharpest knife. But before the blade touched the fruit, something incredible happened.

The peach began to shake and tremble. A crack appeared down the middle, growing wider and wider. Golden light shone from inside. Then, with a burst, the peach split in half.

Inside was a baby boy.

He was perfect and beautiful, with bright eyes and a radiant smile. He did not cry like ordinary babies. Instead, he looked at the old couple and reached out his tiny hands.

The old woman gasped with joy. Tears streamed down her face. "It's a miracle! The gods have given us a son!"

She carefully lifted the baby from the peach. He was warm and real—a living child, not a dream.

"We must name him," the old man said, his voice shaking with emotion.

"He came from a peach," the old woman replied. "Let us call him Momotaro—Peach Boy."

"Momotaro. Yes, it is perfect."

And so their miraculous son was named. After years of loneliness, their home was finally filled with joy and laughter.

Chapter 2: The Boy Who Became a Hero

Momotaro grows into a strong, brave young man beloved by all.

From the beginning, Momotaro was extraordinary. He grew faster and stronger than any normal child. By age one, he looked like a three-year-old. By age five, he had the strength of a grown man. By age ten, he was stronger than anyone in the village.

But Momotaro never used his strength to show off. He was kind and humble, always helping others. He carried heavy loads for elderly farmers, moved stones for builders, and split firewood for families in need. Everyone in the village loved him.

Momotaro was also brave. Once, a wild boar threatened the village crops. While others were afraid, Momotaro faced the animal calmly. "Return to the mountain where you belong," he said firmly. Amazingly, the boar obeyed and left. People said Momotaro could speak to animals.

As Momotaro grew older, he heard disturbing stories from travelers. They spoke of Onigashima—Demon Island—where terrible demons lived. These demons were huge monsters with horns, fangs, and iron clubs. They raided villages, stealing treasures and hurting innocent people. Many warriors had tried to stop them, but all had failed.

One terrible day, the demons came to Momotaro's village. Five huge demons appeared, smashing fences and stealing food. When a young man tried to stop them, they laughed and pushed him aside easily.

"This village is ours now!" the demon chief roared. "We will return whenever we want!"

Momotaro watched helplessly, anger burning in his heart. His father held him back, knowing it was too dangerous to fight. That night, the villagers gathered, frightened and worried.

Momotaro made his decision. "I will go to Onigashima," he announced to his parents. "I will defeat the demons and stop them from hurting anyone ever again."

His parents were shocked. "No! It is too dangerous!" his mother cried. "We cannot lose you!"

"I have been given great strength for a reason," Momotaro replied calmly. "Perhaps I was born to do this. I cannot stand by while innocent people suffer."

His parents knew they could not change his mind. Finally, his mother said through tears, "If you must go, please promise you will be careful."

"I promise," Momotaro said. "I will return victorious."

For three days, they prepared. The old woman made special millet dumplings with secret ingredients that would give strength and courage. The old man gathered supplies and the village blacksmith forged a sword. Everyone wanted to help.

On the morning of departure, Momotaro dressed in his traveling clothes and strapped the sword to his side. His mother gave him the bag of dumplings.

"These are made with all my love," she said, crying. "Remember that I am always with you."

Momotaro bowed deeply to his parents. "Thank you for everything. I will make you proud, and I will return. This is not goodbye forever."

With the villagers watching and calling encouragement, Momotaro walked down the path toward his destiny. He did not look back. His journey to Onigashima had begun.

Chapter 3: The Journey Begins

Momotaro sets out on the long and dangerous road to Demon Island.

Momotaro walked for many days, following the road that led toward the sea where Onigashima lay. The journey was long and tiring, but his determination never wavered.

He traveled through forests and over mountains, across rivers and through valleys. Sometimes he slept under the stars. Sometimes he found shelter in small villages, where people offered him food and a place to rest when they learned of his brave mission.

The landscape changed as he traveled. The familiar hills of his home gave way to stranger territory. The path became rougher and less traveled. Few people lived in these remote areas.

Momotaro thought often of his parents and his village. He remembered the frightened faces of the villagers when the demons attacked. He remembered his promise to return and bring peace. These memories strengthened his resolve whenever he felt tired or discouraged.

On the fifth day of his journey, as he was walking along a lonely mountain road, Momotaro heard a sound. Someone—or something—was following him.

Chapter 4: Three Loyal Companions

Momotaro gains three faithful friends who will help him in his quest.

Meeting the Dog

Momotaro stopped and turned around. A large dog emerged from the bushes beside the road. The animal was lean and looked hungry, but its eyes were intelligent and alert.

"Please, sir," the dog said, speaking in human language. "I smell something delicious in your bag. I have not eaten in three days. Would you share some food with me?"

Momotaro was not surprised that the dog could talk. He had always felt a connection with animals. He opened his bag and took out one of his mother's special millet dumplings.

"Here," he said, offering it to the dog. "Eat this."

The dog devoured the dumpling gratefully. Immediately, he felt strength flowing through his body. "That was the most wonderful food I have ever tasted! Where are you going, kind sir?"

"I am going to Onigashima to defeat the demons who have been terrorizing innocent people," Momotaro replied.

The dog's eyes lit up. "Then let me come with you! Those demons are evil. I am strong and fierce. I will help you fight them."

Momotaro smiled. "Very well. You may join me. Together we will be stronger."

And so the dog became Momotaro's first companion. They continued down the road together.

The Monkey Joins

Two days later, they were climbing a steep mountain path when they heard chattering above them. A monkey was sitting in a tree, looking down at them with bright, curious eyes.

"Excuse me!" the monkey called. "I could not help but notice that wonderful smell coming from your bag. Might you have some food to spare? I am terribly hungry."

Momotaro stopped and looked up at the monkey. "Come down here," he said.

The monkey swung down from branch to branch until he landed lightly in front of them. Momotaro gave him one of the special dumplings.

The monkey ate it quickly, his eyes growing wide with delight. "Incredible! I have never tasted anything so good! Thank you, kind human. Where are you heading?"

"We are going to Onigashima to defeat the demons," the dog answered proudly.

"The demons?" The monkey's expression became serious. "Those terrible creatures have caused so much suffering. I would like to help you stop them. I am clever and quick. I can climb and jump better than anyone. Please let me join you!"

"You are welcome to come," Momotaro said. "Three are stronger than two."

The monkey joined their group, chattering excitedly about the adventure ahead.

The Pheasant Arrives

Three days passed. Momotaro, the dog, and the monkey traveled together, sharing stories and becoming friends. They were crossing a wide meadow when they heard a beautiful song above them.

A magnificent pheasant was flying overhead, his colorful feathers shining in the sunlight. He circled down and landed gracefully in front of them.

"Good travelers," the pheasant said politely, "I have been flying for a long time and I am exhausted and hungry. I noticed you have food in your bag. Would you be kind enough to share a small amount with me?"

Momotaro smiled and offered the pheasant one of the dumplings. The bird ate it delicately, and immediately his fatigue vanished.

"What miraculous food! Thank you, generous one. May I ask where you are bound?"

"We are going to fight the demons of Onigashima," Momotaro explained.

The pheasant's eyes flashed with determination. "Those demons have raided my homeland and destroyed many nests. I have wanted revenge for a long time, but I could not fight them alone. Please allow me to accompany you. I can fly and see great distances. I can attack from the sky. Together, we will be even stronger."

"Then join us," Momotaro said warmly. "Four friends are better than three."

The Power of Teamwork

That evening, as they camped beside a stream, the four companions talked about the battle ahead.

"The demons are very strong," the dog said. "We must be brave and fierce."

"We must also be clever," the monkey added. "Strength alone may not be enough."

"We must work together," the pheasant said wisely. "Each of us has different skills. If we combine our abilities, we can succeed where others have failed."

Momotaro nodded. "You are all correct. The demons are powerful, but they are also cruel and selfish. They do not understand friendship or cooperation. That will be our advantage. We fight not for treasure or glory, but to protect innocent people. That gives us a strength they cannot match."

The dog, monkey, and pheasant looked at each other and then at Momotaro. They could see the determination in his eyes and feel the courage in his heart. They knew they had chosen the right leader to follow.

"We will not let you down, Momotaro," they said together.

Momotaro smiled at his loyal friends. "And I will not let you down either. Tomorrow we reach the sea. The day after, we cross to Onigashima. Soon, the demons will learn what happens when good stands against evil."

They slept peacefully that night, knowing that whatever dangers lay ahead, they would face them together.

Chapter 5: The Battle at Demon Island

Momotaro and his companions face the demons in their fortress.

Arriving at Onigashima

After crossing the sea in a small boat, Momotaro and his three companions finally reached Onigashima. The island rose before them, dark and forbidding. Steep cliffs surrounded it, and at the top sat a massive stone fortress with black walls and iron gates.

"So that is where the demons live," the monkey whispered.

"It looks impenetrable," the pheasant observed.

"We will find a way," Momotaro said confidently.

They climbed the rocky path toward the fortress. As they approached the massive iron gates, a demon guard spotted them.

"Intruders!" the demon roared, running toward them with his club raised.

The Battle Begins

The dog leaped forward with a fierce bark and attacked the demon guard, biting and clawing. The surprised demon fell backward. More demons rushed out from the gates, their clubs swinging.

The monkey jumped onto one demon's head, scratching and pulling his hair, confusing him completely. The pheasant flew at another demon's face, pecking at his eyes with his sharp beak. The demons roared in pain and anger.

Momotaro drew his sword and fought with skill and courage. He moved quickly, avoiding the demons' heavy clubs while striking back with precision. His sword flashed in the sunlight.

"These intruders are strong!" one demon shouted in surprise.

"There are only four of them! Attack together!" another yelled.

But the four companions fought as a team, protecting each other and using their different abilities. The dog attacked low, the monkey moved with quick agility, the pheasant struck from above, and Momotaro coordinated their efforts while fighting the strongest demons himself.

More and more demons poured out of the fortress, but Momotaro and his companions held their ground. The demons had never faced opponents who worked together so well. They were used to fighting individuals, not a coordinated team.

The Demon Chief

A tremendous roar echoed from inside the fortress. The largest, most fearsome demon of all emerged—the demon chief. He was twice the size of the other demons, with enormous horns and muscles like steel. His iron club was as big as a tree trunk.

"Who dares attack my fortress?" he bellowed. "I will crush you all!"

The demon chief swung his massive club at Momotaro. The young hero dodged and countered with his sword, but the demon chief's skin was tough. The other demons rallied around their leader, encouraged by his arrival.

The situation was becoming desperate. Momotaro and his companions were growing tired, and the demons seemed endless.

But then Momotaro remembered his mother's words and the love of his village. He thought of all the innocent people the demons had hurt. His determination burned brighter than ever.

"Dog! Monkey! Pheasant!" he called. "Use your best attacks—all at once!"

They understood immediately. The pheasant flew high and dove straight at the demon chief's eyes. The monkey leaped onto the demon's shoulders, covering his face. The dog bit down hard on the demon's leg. And Momotaro struck with all his might, his sword finding its mark.

The demon chief stumbled and fell to his knees with a thunderous crash. The other demons stopped fighting, shocked to see their mighty leader defeated.

"Please, have mercy!" the demon chief groaned. "We surrender!"

Victory

Momotaro stood over the fallen demon chief, his sword ready. "You have caused terrible suffering to innocent people. You have stolen, destroyed, and hurt countless victims. Why should I show you mercy?"

"We were wrong," the demon chief said, his fierce expression now showing fear and shame. "We used our strength to take what we wanted without thinking of others' pain. Please, spare our lives, and we will change our ways."

Momotaro considered carefully. He could destroy the demons, but he was not a cruel person. He believed in justice, not revenge.

"Very well," he said finally. "I will spare you. But you must promise never to raid villages again. You must return everything you have stolen. And you must leave this place and never return."

"We promise!" the demon chief said quickly. "We will do as you say!"

Momotaro made the demons open their treasure storehouse. Inside were mountains of gold, silver, jewels, and precious items—all stolen from innocent people over many years.

"This treasure will be returned to those you stole from," Momotaro declared. "Now go, and remember this day. Remember that cruelty and selfishness lead only to defeat."

The demons bowed low and fled from the island, never to return. Momotaro and his three companions stood victorious in the fortress courtyard.

"We did it!" the monkey cheered.

"You led us well, Momotaro," the dog said proudly.

"Together, we were invincible," the pheasant added.

Momotaro smiled at his loyal friends. "We succeeded because we trusted each other and fought for what was right. Now let us take this treasure home and restore it to its rightful owners."

Chapter 6: The Triumphant Return

Momotaro brings peace and prosperity back to his village.

Momotaro and his three companions loaded the treasure onto a boat and began the journey home. The voyage was long but their spirits were high. They had accomplished what seemed impossible.

As they traveled, they stopped at villages that had been raided by the demons. Momotaro returned stolen items to grateful families. People wept with joy when they saw their precious belongings again—wedding gifts, family heirlooms, things they thought were lost forever.

Word of Momotaro's victory spread quickly across the land. When they finally approached his home village, they found a huge crowd waiting to welcome them. Everyone was cheering and celebrating.

The old man and old woman stood at the front of the crowd, tears of joy streaming down their faces. When they saw their son safe and victorious, they could hardly believe it.

"Momotaro! You have returned!" his mother cried, embracing him tightly.

"I told you I would come back," Momotaro said, smiling. "And I have brought peace for everyone."

The village held a great celebration that lasted three days. There was food, music, and dancing. Momotaro shared the remaining treasure with all the villagers, ensuring that everyone benefited from his quest.

The dog, monkey, and pheasant were honored as heroes too. The villagers built them comfortable homes and provided them with all they needed. The three companions decided to stay in the village, remaining close to their friend Momotaro.

From that day forward, the demons never troubled the land again. Villages that had lived in fear could now live in peace. Children could play safely, farmers could work their fields without worry, and travelers could journey without danger.

Momotaro remained in his village, living with his parents and continuing to help his neighbors. He never sought glory or power. He was content with a simple life, knowing he had made the world a better place.

The old man and old woman lived many more happy years, grateful every day for the miraculous gift that had come to them in a peach. Their son had not only brought them joy but had brought hope and peace to their entire land.

And so the story ends, but the legend of Momotaro, the Peach Boy, lives on forever.

Epilogue: The Lesson of Momotaro

What this timeless tale teaches us.

The story of Momotaro has been told in Japan for centuries because it contains important truths that every generation needs to hear.

Courage in the Face of Danger

Momotaro shows us that true courage is not the absence of fear, but the willingness to do what is right despite fear. He knew the demons were dangerous, but he went anyway because innocent people needed help. In our own lives, we all face challenges that frighten us. Momotaro's example reminds us to be brave.

The Value of True Friendship

Momotaro could not have defeated the demons alone. He needed the dog's fierceness, the monkey's cleverness, and the pheasant's ability to fly. Each companion had different strengths, and together they were invincible. This teaches us that cooperation is stronger than individual effort. When we work together and value each other's unique abilities, we can accomplish great things.

Fighting for Justice

Momotaro did not seek treasure or fame. He fought because the demons were hurting innocent people and someone needed to stop them. He reminds us that we all have a responsibility to stand up against injustice when we see it. We may not fight demons, but we can help those who are being treated unfairly.

The Power of Kindness

Momotaro gained his three companions by sharing his food with them when they were hungry. A simple act of kindness created loyal friendships that made victory possible. In our

daily lives, small acts of kindness can have big effects. We never know when helping someone might change everything.

Why This Story Endures

Momotaro's tale has survived for so long because these lessons are timeless. Every generation faces its own "demons"—challenges, injustices, and difficulties. And every generation needs heroes who are brave, kind, and willing to fight for what is right.

The story also reminds us that heroes can come from anywhere. Momotaro was not born into royalty or wealth. He was found in a peach by ordinary people. This tells us that anyone can become a hero if they have courage, kindness, and determination.

As you finish this story, think about your own life. What demons do you need to face? What friends can help you? What kindness can you show? Perhaps you, too, can be a hero in your own way.

The spirit of Momotaro lives in all of us, waiting for the moment when we choose to be brave, choose to be kind, and choose to make the world a little better.

And that is why the story of the Peach Boy will continue to be told for many generations to come.

The End

【Disclaimer】

The information provided in this book is for educational and reference purposes only. The content of this book does not guarantee specific success or results and does not constitute professional advice regarding health, investment, business, or other matters.

When using this book, please consult with specialists in relevant fields as necessary. In particular, we recommend seeking advice from qualified professionals when making decisions related to investments or health.

While we have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information in this book at the time of publication, some information may become outdated over time. Additionally, please note that portions of this book have been created using AI technology, and there is a possibility that some details may contain inaccuracies.

【Copyright Notice】

Unauthorized reproduction, reprinting, alteration, or public transmission of all or part of this e-book, as well as transferring this data to third parties whether for compensation or free of charge, is prohibited. Illegal acts such as reproduction for purposes other than personal use, or transfer to third parties, will be subject to punishment under copyright law and other related laws.